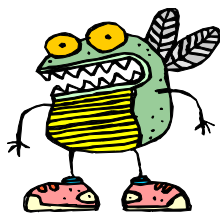


Worse Than a Computer Virus? Plant a Summer Stress Garden

A computer virus is a program that can replicate itself and infect a computer. However, there are other types of harmful codes to avoid. One is called a "rootkit." A rootkit is not a virus; it is "malware." You can unwittingly transfer a rootkit to your computer when you land on an "attack" Web site while surfing the Internet. A rootkit hides inside critical files you can't delete without making your computer become nonfunctional. The rootkit may then permit third-party criminals to steal personal information on your computer without being detected. At home, use virus protection software that will spot rootkit malware. If your computer becomes infected, you may need an expert to help remove it. At work, follow computer use rules. Never violate your workplace computer use policies.



Start a stress garden and grow your own anti-stress foods in season! Many foods can help you manage stress because of the nutrients they contain. One of these "anti-stress" nutrients is magnesium. Foods high in magnesium include spinach, beets (especially the stems), blackberries, and raspberries. Magnesium plays a role in relaxing muscles, and works in concert with other metabolizing functions of the body that contribute to reduced stress. It also aids sleep and helps to reduce anxiety. Discover more about foods and their contribution to your health at Nutrition.gov.



Rape Prevention Tips to Know

Thanks to education, awareness, and more effective criminal justice, sexual assaults on people aged 12 and older have declined nearly 50 percent since the early 1990s (National Crime Victimization Survey, U.S. Department of Justice). Learn dozens of the most recommended prevention tips for rape at the Rape Abuse Incest National Network (RAINN). Teach them to others. Example: Avoid putting music headphones in both ears so that you can be more aware of your surroundings, especially if you are walking alone.



Source: www.rainn.org.

Teens Taking Risks for Kicks

Summer means new opportunities, places to go, fun events. Unfortunately, summer also means increased risks for teens. Researchers say teens are more likely to take chances for sheer kicks. Why teenagers participate in more risky behaviors than adults isn't fully understood, but a phenomenon called the "health paradox" defines the problem. This period of greatest health corresponds with a statistical peak of mortality. Risk taking, such as drug use, high-risk stunts, unprotected sex, fast driving, and workplace safety violations are all more common among teens. The riskiest time of all? Age 14. (*Cognitive Development*, Volume 25, Issue 2, April-June 2010) So, keep open lines of healthy communication and talk to teens about the potential for life-altering dangers of risky behaviors.



Handling Criticism Like a Pro

No matter what your job or position, you can be certain that you will experience criticism periodically. This inevitability calls for a personal strategy to master its impact so you can make criticism work for you. Whether you are corrected by peers in a group or criticized during an annual review, consider these four pillars of managing criticism like a pro: 1) Criticism usually stings, and it's often a surprise over which you have little or no control. Accepting this can help you respond to it with a cool head. 2) Recognize that some part of criticism is usually true. Look for that part and be enthusiastic about it. Avoid attacking the criticism, which only diminishes how much you gain from it. 3) Criticism is usually not personal, but simply a part of necessary communication in work organizations. Its importance explains why receptivity is often included in performance reviews. 4) Demonstrating receptiveness to criticism makes a strong and positive impact on the one offering it. As a result, you will usually be rewarded with an enhanced reputation for your willingness to accept criticism.



Plan Fun and the Work Will Follow

If your workload seems to leave you with no time for fun and leisure, you may need better strategies for balancing work and life. Some pros recommend planning your fun first, obligating yourself to the leisure and recreational pursuits you enjoy, *and then* scheduling your workload. Practicing this strategy toward work-life balance will cause you to work more effectively, help you resist distractions that interfere with timely completion of work, and focus your attention like a laser on work that is most important. At first, creating "forced" obligations for leisure and social activity will challenge your work schedule and add to your stress. In time, however, you will prove to yourself that you can fashion a more balanced work-life arrangement. You will feel more accomplished, less trapped by work, and less resentful of the control you imagine time has over your life.



Reducing the Stress of Summer Moves

Summer is a time when people move away, change jobs, change careers, switch schools, and leave old friends. Moving can be surprisingly stressful. If you're moving, follow a few tips: 1) Do nothing until you make a to-do list, and then allocate the work over a period of weeks until the move. 2) Don't just start packing. Get rid of all the junk and clutter first. 3) Plan local trips to favorite places to recall memories and have social get-togethers with old friends as a way to experience closure. Don't "blot it all out" with denial to avoid saying goodbye. 4) If your budget isn't too tight, reduce stress during this period by treating yourself to a couple of meals out. 5) Check out your local library for resources with tips to help you and/or children cope with moving stress (and loss). For a popular resource with great tips and ideas, try *29 Days to a Smooth Move* by Donna Kozik and Tara Maras. A version of it is downloadable at Amazon.com.



Are You Geriatric Syndrome Savvy?

The longer people live, the more likely they will develop medical conditions that lie within a wide range of geriatric syndromes. Vision and hearing problems, confusion in the evening (or when traveling to unfamiliar places), dementia, bladder problems, risk of falls, delirium, malnutrition, and dizziness are only a few of the many geriatric syndromes. Knowing these syndromes, and understanding how they interconnect and trigger other seemingly unrelated geriatric conditions, may help save a life or reduce the frequency of emergencies, hospitalizations, and crisis calls for your assistance. If you have elder-care responsibilities, get savvy about geriatric syndromes by visiting the American Geriatric Society's website. Look for the society's *Guide to Geriatric Syndromes*.

